CATLIN'S

NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN PORTFOLIO.

Plate N^{o} 1.

GROUP OF NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS, FROM LIFE.

By whatever means, at what time soever, or for what end, Man and ferocious Beasts have been placed upon the almost boundless Prairies, and through the rude and Rocky Mountains of America; and for what wise purposes soever the dates and sources of their origin have been sealed in impenetrable mystery; it is a truth incontrovertible, that such were found to be the joint inhabitants of all that important half of the globe; and a truth rendered of tenfold interest at the present time, from the lamentable fact that both are rapidly travelling to extinction before the destructive waves of civilization, which seem destined soon to roll over the remotest parts of the continent.

Of these joint and original inhabitants, one half at least, of North America, has been already entirely depopulated; and of Man, who falls by poisons and diseases not imbibed by the brute creation, millions have already sunk under dissipation and disease which have been carried by civilized men, over the other half, and thinned their ranks to the numbers which I have estimated in my former work, to which I have alluded in the preamble to this.

Man, in the vast plains and mountains of America, has been found, as in other parts of the world, maintaining his ascendency over all the beasts of the forest, by the aid of his reason and invention, which have enabled him to construct his weapons, and to employ the means to convert the various animals to his aid and his subsistence in the numerous modes represented in the following pages.

The group in Plate N^{o} 1 is composed of three Portraits from my Collection, representing three different tribes, of various latitudes, and well illustrating a number of the leading characteristics of this interesting part of the human family.

An Osage Warrior, from a southern latitude, entirely primitive in his habits and dress; his head shaved, and ornamented with the graceful crest manufactured from the hair of the deer's tail and horsehair, (an uniform custom of the tribe;) his robe of the buffalo's hide, with the battles of his life emblazoned on it; his necklace made of the claws of the grizzly bear; his bow and quiver slung upon his back; and his leggins fringed with scalp-locks taken as trophies from the heads of enemies slain by him in battle.

An Iroquois (an almost extinguished tribe), from a northern climate, with long hair; with a ring in his nose, and head-dress of quills and feathers, according to the mode of his tribe; with his tomahawk in hand, and his dress mostly of civilized manufacture, indicating an approach to civilization, to which all the remnants of this and several other contiguous tribes have long since attained.

A Pawnee Woman, from an intermediate latitude, in primitive dress, made entirely of skins; and in this as well as in the mode of dressing the head and ornamenting the person, a very fair illustration of the general modes and personal appearance of the females, who exhibit much less forcibly than the men, the characteristic differences of the various tribes.

Two millions or more of these reasoning beings are still existing in North America, strangely mixed up with, and holding dominion over, the beasts of the forest, upon the flesh of which they chiefly subsist, obtaining it by the various exciting means of appropriation to which I am now to introduce the reader in the following illustrations.

Plate N^{o} 2.

THE AMERICAN BUFFALO.

This noble animal, which is the largest and most formidable of the ruminating species, existing in North America since the extinction of the Mastodon race, has been the most useful in contributing to Man's subsistence; and, consequently, most probably, allowed the longest to inhabit with him those vast and almost interminable regions of forest and prairie where the Great Spirit designed them to roam together.

By this portrait of a bull, which is a very faithful one, it will be seen that the American Buffalo is a very different variety of the Ox species from the buffalo of the Eastern continent, and probably closely allied to, if not exactly the same as, the European